

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2014

Administrator Daniel M. Tangherlini
U.S. General Services Administration
GSA Office of the Administrator
1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405

Dear Administrator Tangherlini:

We are writing to express our concern that the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) continues to rely exclusively on the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system for certifying the energy efficiency of its portfolio of buildings, when another consensus-based, cost-effective system is available and, in fact, is recommended for use by GSA. In October 2013, GSA reported to the Department of Energy (DOE) the results of an agency review of green building certification systems as required under section 436(h) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). GSA recommended the use of both LEED 2009 and Green Globes 2010 developed by the Green Building Initiative (GBI) as green building certification systems to be used by federal agencies.

We were encouraged by the dual recommendation, as it provides federal agencies the ability to choose more than one green building rating system and creates competition among green building programs serving the federal government. In this evolving area, competition is essential to continuing advances in energy efficient building standards and is consistent with federal contracting policies designed to ensure that services provided to federal agencies are optimized through the effective pressures of competition.

Given GSA's recommendation in 2013, we were concerned to see that in the March 2014 publication of GSA's P100 design guide, "Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service," GSA selected LEED exclusively. This appears to be in direct contradiction of Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) that require competition in government purchasing.

The federal government should be encouraging robust competition among rating systems, which leads to cost-effective improvements in building performance while also driving improvements in the rating systems themselves as an understanding of best practices evolves. Granting a monopoly to one system does not achieve this goal. Agencies should conduct an open bidding process between the two recommended systems and choose the system that is most appropriate to the building type and use. One size does not fit all.

Finally, while GSA recommended LEED 2009 in its October 2013 letter to DOE, we understand that USGBC has revised its system and the new version, called LEEDv4, will replace LEED 2009. Unfortunately, LEED v4 includes a disclosure and "optimization" (reformulation) credit that disparages and discriminates against many proven building materials and has nothing to do with building performance.

We would like to see truly fair and open competition between the two green building rating systems recommended by GSA. We ask that you personally set in motion a competitive bidding procedure for the use of Green Globes and LEED throughout all GSA buildings.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.



James Renacci
Member of Congress

Sincerely,

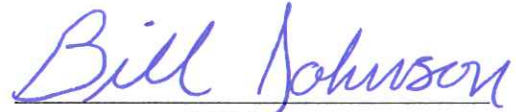


Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

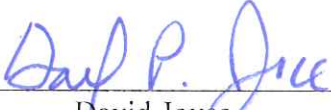
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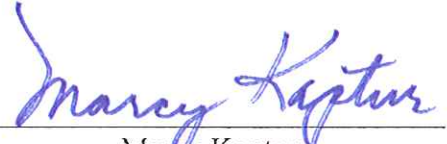
Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



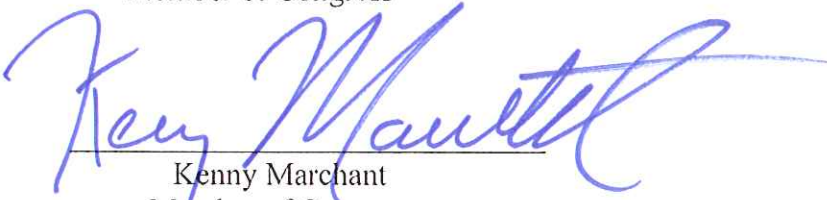
Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



David Joyce
Member of Congress



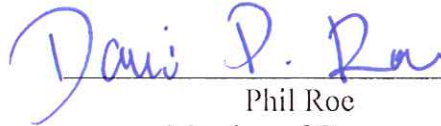
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